

The Secrets of the Hohenzollerns

STARTLING EXPOSURE OF INNER LIFE OF KAISER AND CROWN PRINCE AS TOLD BY COUNT ERNST VON HELTZENDORFF TO WILLIAM LEQUEUX

EDITORIAL NOTE.—William Lequeux, who has chronicled for his friend, Count Ernst von Helzendorff, the latter's revelations of the inner life of the Imperial German court, has long been recognized throughout Europe as the possessor of its latest secrets.

The English "Who's Who" says of him: "He has intimate knowledge of the secret service of Continental countries and is considered by the government of Great Britain as an authority on such matters." Another authority says: "Few people have been more closely associated with or have more of the inside of the machinery of Germany than he."

Lequeux probably has more secrets of secret information at his command than any contemporary in the world. For the last six years the British Government has made valuable use of his vast store of secret information through a specially organized department with which Lequeux works as a voluntary consultant.

Count von Helzendorff became an intimate of Lequeux several years ago, and the outbreak of the war has been living in retirement in France since August, 1914, and it was through him that the crown prince's late personal adjutant permitted to make public these revelations of the inner life of the Hohenzollerns—that the demerits of the world might come to know the secret of the hidden, personalities of the two dominant members of the autocracy they are now exposed.

Another Victim of the Crown Prince

ATB on the night of November 18, 1912, I was busy at work in the crown prince's room at the Marlie palace at Potsdam. I, as his imperial highness' personal adjutant, had been traveling all day with him from Cologne to Berlin. We had done a tour of military inspection in Westphalia, and, as usual, "Willie's" conduct had not been exactly exemplary.

On the night in question much had happened. The emperor had, a month before, returned from a visit to England, where he had been engaged by speeches and handshakes, public and private, blowing a narcotic dust in the nostrils of your dear but too confiding nation.

"Helzendorff!" exclaimed the crown prince, as he suddenly entered the room where I was busy attending to a pile of papers. "Do get through all those letters and things. Burn them all if you can. What do they matter?"

"Many of them are matters of grave importance. Here, for instance, is a report of the chief of military intelligence in Washington."

"Oh, old friend! Tear it up! He is but an old fossil at best. As you Helzendorff is, I desire it to be of considerable use," he added. "His majesty told me tonight that after his visit to England he has conceived the idea of establishing an official movement for the improvement of better relations between Britain and Germany."

"The dear British are always ready to receive such movements with open arms. At Carlton House terrace they strongly endorse the emperor's ideas, and he tells me that the movement should first arise in commercial and shipping circles. Herr Ballin will generate the idea in his offices in London and the various British ports, while his majesty has had General, the ex-ambassador at Washington, in view as the man to bring forth the suggestion publicly. Indeed, tonight from the Wilhelmstrasse there has been sent a message to his majesty on the Mosel commanding him to consult with his majesty, Von Hertendorff, his place at Washington a few months ago."

"But Von Gessler is an inveterate enemy of Britain," I exclaimed in surprise, still seated at my table.

"The world does not know that. The whole scheme is based upon Britain's ignorance of our intentions. Von Gessler forward as the dear, good, Anglophile friend with his hand outstretched from the Wilhelmstrasse. Oh, Helzendorff!" he laughed. "It is really intensely amusing, is it not?"

I was silent. I had seen the crown prince laid plot against Great Britain was proceeding apace.

"Get through all that—tonight if you can, Helzendorff," the crown prince leaves for Treseburg, in the Harz, tomorrow, and in the evening we go to Nice."

"To Nice?" I exclaimed.

"Yes," he said. "I have a friend there."

A friend there! I reflected. I could only suppose that the attraction in Nice was of the feminine gender.

"Then the lady is in Nice?" I remarked, for sometimes I was permitted, on account of my long service with the emperor, to speak familiarly.

"Lady, no!" he retorted. "It is a man. And I want to get to Nice at the earliest moment. So get through those infernal documents. Burn them all. They are better out of the way," he laughed.

The Trip to Nice.

Just before eleven o'clock on the following night we left the Marlie palace. His imperial highness traveled incognito as he always did when visiting France, assuming the name of Count von Gruenau. With us was his personal valet, Schuler, the military secretary, Major Lentze, and Eckardt, the commissioner of secret police for his highness' personal protection.

After a restless night—for there were many stoppages—I spent the next day with the crown prince in long and tiring discussions on military affairs. I endeavored to obtain from him some reason why we were proceeding to Nice, but to all my inquiries he was mutely dumb.

Only a fortnight before he had had a quarrel with his wife.

"Chill is a fool!" he had declared openly to me, after she had left the room in anger.

We had been busy arranging a program of official visits in eastern Germany, when suddenly the crown prince entered, pale with anger, and demanded thereof an explanation of a certain anonymous letter which she held in her hand.

"Kindly read that!" she said coldly, "and explain what it means."

The crown prince, with a sudden, almost sinister expression overspreading his countenance, a look which is such a marked characteristic of his.

Then, almost snatching the letter from his young wife's fingers, he read it through, and with a sudden movement tore it up and flung it upon the carpet, saying:

"I refuse to discuss any unsigned letter! Really, if we were to notice every letter written by the common man, we should, indeed, have sufficient to do."

His wife's arched brows narrowed. Her face betrayed fierce anger.

"I happen to have inquired, and I now know that those allegations are correct!" she cried. "This dark-haired singer-woman, Irene Speroni, has obtained great success on the variety stage in Italy. She is the star of the Sals Margherita in Rome."

"Well?" he asked in defiance. "And what of it, pray?"

"That letter you have destroyed tells me the truth. I received it a few days ago, and sent an agent to Italy in order to learn the truth. He has returned tonight. See!" And suddenly she produced a crumpled snapshot photograph of the crown prince in his polo-playing garb, and with him a smartly-dressed young woman, whose features were in the shadow.

"Yes," she cried bitterly. "You refuse, of course, to look upon this piece of evidence, now know why you went to Wiesbaden. The woman was singing there, and you gave her a pair of emerald and diamond earrings which you purchased from Volgold in Unter den Linden. See! Here is the bill for them."

And again she produced a slip of paper.

The scene ended in the poor woman, in a frantic paroxysm of despair, tearing off the splendid necklace of diamonds at her throat and casting it to her on their marriage—and casting it full into his face.

Then, realizing that the scene had become too tragic, I took her small hand, and with a word of sympathy, led her out of the room and along the corridor.

As I left her she burst into a sudden torrent of tears; yet when I returned again to the crown prince I found his manner had entirely changed. He treated his wife's natural resentment and indignation as a huge joke, and it was then that his imperial highness declared to me:

"Chill is a fool!"

"Listen, Helzendorff," his highness exclaimed suddenly. "In Nice I may disappear for a day or two. I may be missing. But if I am, please don't raise a fuss about it. I'm incognito, and nobody will know. I may be absent for seven days. If I am not back by that time then you may make inquiry."

"But the Commissioner of Police Eckardt! He will surely know?" I remarked in surprise.

"No. He won't know. I shall endeavor to keep it as quiet as possible. I will curb the activities of our most estimable friend. Tell him not to worry, and he will be paid a thousand marks on the day Count von Gruenau reappears."

I smiled, for I saw the influence of the eternal feminine.

"No, Helzendorff. You are quite mistaken," he said, reading my thoughts. "There is no lady in this case. I am out here for secret purposes of my own. For that reason I take you into my confidence rather than that unnecessary inquiry should be made and some of those infernal journalists get hold of the fact that the Count von Gruenau, the crown prince, is a fool to take this salon."

I was a fool to take this salon. I ought to have traveled as an ordinary passenger, I know, but, he laughed, "this is really comfortable and, after all, what do we care about the world's opinion?—eh? Surely we can afford to laugh at it when all the honors of the game are already in our hands."

His words mystified me, but I became even more mystified by his action. He was a fool to take this salon. I ought to have traveled as an ordinary passenger, I know, but, he laughed, "this is really comfortable and, after all, what do we care about the world's opinion?—eh? Surely we can afford to laugh at it when all the honors of the game are already in our hands."

I was in ignorance that a fortnight before Hermann Harit, one of his highness' couriers, had left Potsdam and on arrival at Nice had rented for three months the fine Villa Lilla.

We were all here on the evening of our arrival I accompanied the crown prince down into the town to the Jette promenade.

We smoked together and chatted, as often did when his imperial highness became bored. I was still mystified why we had come to the Riviera so early in the season.

Yet our coming had, no doubt, been privately signaled, because within half an hour the Count von Gruenau, the crown prince, was in the Villa Lilla.

Lilla a short, stout old Frenchman, with white, bristly hair—who I afterward found out was Monsieur Paul Bavouzet, the newly appointed prefect of the department of Alpes-Maritimes—called to leave his card, on the Count von Gruenau.

The imperial incognito only means that the public are to be deluded. Officialdom never is. They know the ruse, and support it all the world over. His highness the crown prince was paying his annual visit to Nice, and the president had sent his compliments through his representative, the bristly-haired little prefect.

"Ah! Helzendorff. How good it is to get a breath of soft air from the Mediterranean! We shall have a port on this pleasant sea one day—if we live as long—eh?"

That remark showed the trend of events. It showed how, hand in hand with the emperor, he was urging preparation, to look upon this piece of his primary object, the destruction of the powers which, when the volcano erupted, united as allies.

The Mysterious Lady.

After we had been at the Villa Lilla about ten days I was one afternoon seated outside the popular Cafe de l'Opera, in the Place Massena, when a lady, dressed in deep mourning, and wearing the heavy veil in French style, passed along the pavement, glanced at me, and then, hesitating, she turned, and coming back, advanced to the little table in the corner where I was sitting.

"May I be permitted to have a word with you, monsieur?" she asked in French. In a low, refined voice.

"Certainly," was my reply, and I rose and drew a chair for her.

She glanced round quickly, as though to satisfy herself that she would not be overheard. I saw that she was about twenty-four, handsome, dark-haired, with well-cut features.

"I know, monsieur, that I am a complete stranger to you," she exclaimed with a smile, "but to me you are quite familiar by sight. I have passed you many times in Berlin and in Potsdam, and I know that you are Count von Helzendorff, personal adjutant to his highness the crown prince—our Count von Gruenau, as he is known here in France."

A LETTER FROM THE CROWN PRINCE'S PERSONAL ADJUTANT TO WILLIAM LEQUEUX, POSSESSOR OF THE SECRETS OF EUROPE.

Venceux Nadon, par Muret-sur-Louze, Seine-et-Marne, February 10th, 1917.

My dear Lequeux: I have just finished reading the proofs of your articles describing my life as an official at the imperial court at Potsdam, and the two or three small errors you made I have duly corrected.

The review contains one witty intimation which I have related to you were many of them known to yourself, for, as the intimate friend of the crown prince, the ex-crown prince of Saxony, you were, before the war, closely associated with many of those at court whose names appear in these articles.

The recollections which I have made, and which you have recorded here, are but a tithe of the disclosures which I could make, and if the world desires more, I shall be pleased to furnish you with other and even more startling details, which you may also put into print.

My service as personal adjutant to the crown prince is, happily, at an end, and now, with the treachery of Germany against civilization glaringly revealed, I feel, in my retirement, no compunction in exposing all I know concerning the secrets of the Kaiser and his son.

With most cordial greetings from Your sincere friend, (Signed) ERNST VON HELTZENDORFF.

an interview, then I will reveal all I know, and, further, will suggest a means of preventing the truth from leaking away.

"But you are French," I said.

"I have told you so," she laughed.

"But probably his highness will refuse to let me tell you this."

From her little gold chain she produced a small, unmounted photograph of herself, and handed it to me.

"When he recognizes who wishes to see him he will understand," she said, in a quiet, refined voice. "A letter addressed to Frau de Rouville at the Post Restante at Marseilles will quickly find me. I do not wish the letter to be sent to me here. From Marseilles I shall duly receive it."

"I have a duty to me to do," she said, in a quiet, refined voice. "I confess," I exclaimed last then, "I do not exactly see the necessity for an interview with his highness, when whatever you tell me—as his personal adjutant—will be regarded as strictly in confidence."

"Yes," she said, "Count von Helzendorff, that I am his highness' friend, and wish to approach him with motives of friendship."

"You wish for no payment for this information, eh?" I asked suspiciously, half believing that she might be a secret agent of France.

"Payment—of course not!" she answered, half indignantly. "Show that photograph to the crown prince, and tell him that I apply for an interview."

Then, rather abruptly, she rose and walked away, leaving me with her photograph in my hand.

The crown prince was out motoring, and did not get back to the villa until seven o'clock.

As soon as I heard of his return I went to his room and recounted my strange adventure with the dark-haired young woman in black. He became keenly interested, and the more so when I told him of her secret knowledge of the Kaiser's intended establishment of a bogus entente with Great Britain.

"She wishes to see you," I said.

"And she told me to give you her photograph."

I handed it to him.

At sight of it his face instantly changed. He took the photograph and examined the photograph beneath the light.

Next second, however, he had recovered his self-possession and said:

"Yes, of course, I know her. She wants me to write to her at Boulogne at the Post Restante at Marseilles, eh?—I'll tell it over."

Late in the afternoon, two days later, his highness, who had been walking alone, returned to the villa with a stranger, a tall, rather thin, fair-haired man, undoubtedly a German, and the pair were closeted together, holding counsel evidently for a considerable time. Where his highness met him I knew not, but when later on I entered the room I saw that the pair were on quite friendly terms.

His highness addressed him as Herr Schafer, and when he had left he told me that he was from the Wilhelmstrasse and had been attached to the embassy at Washington, and afterwards in London, "for affairs of the press."

Whatever was in progress was a strict secret between the pair. The more I saw of Herr Schafer the more I disliked him. He had cruel eyes and to his countenance he was a very clever and cunning person.

For a full fortnight the crown prince and the man Schafer were almost inseparable. Was it for the purpose of meeting Schafer that he had gone to Nice? The whole plot will be exposed in a few days."

"From what source have you derived this knowledge?" I asked, looking at her in amazement.

But she again smiled mysteriously.

"I merely tell you this in order to prove to you that I am in possession of certain facts known to but few people."

"You evidently are," I said. "But who intends to betray the truth to France?"

"I regret, count, that I cannot answer your question."

"If you are, as you say, the crown prince's friend, and who are so friendly as not to let us know the truth, so that steps may be taken, perhaps, to avoid the secret of Germany's diplomacy from leaking out to her enemies."

"I can tell you, count, is that the matter is one of the gravest importance."

"But will you not speak openly, and give us the actual facts?"

"I will—but to his imperial highness alone," was her answer.

"If his highness will honor me with

as I have heard nothing, I wish you to deliver another message very urgent one. Tell him I must see him, for I dread daily lest the truth of the Kaiser's real intentions be known at the Quai d'Orsay."

"Certainly," was my reply. "I will deliver the message at once."

"Tell him that my sole desire is to act in the interests of the empire and himself," she urged.

"But, forgive me," I said, "I cannot see why you should interest yourself in the crown prince, if he declines to communicate with you."

"I have my reasons, Count von Helzendorff," was her rather haughty reply. "Please tell him that the matter will not brook further delay."

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was performing in London, and she had, unknown to him, opened his dispatch box and from among secret correspondence had learned the real truth regarding the proposed entente which the emperor contemplated.

Schafer, alarmed at the woman's knowledge, and yet fascinated by her charms, had gone to the crown prince, and, in turn, had seen the woman in Wiesbaden. Finding her so dangerous to the emperor's plans he first introduced her to a young French marquis, de Vienne by name, who pestered her with his attentions, and followed her to Beaulieu. Having so far succeeded, the crown prince went to Nice and played upon Schafer's love for the woman, pointing out that she was playing a double game and urging him to watch.

He did so and discovered the truth. Then there occurred the tragedy of Jealousy, exactly as the police believed.

Here Schafer had, however, escaped to Germany, and the police of San Remo are still in ignorance of his identity.

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Death From Superstition.

A superstitious Buddhist caused a man's death in Mura, Japan. A dealer in clogs went mad, owing to money troubles. His wife and his sister committed suicide by the same method. Though having his position by the will of the king of Babylon, he rebelled against that king. He thought that the aid of the surrounding nations, especially Egypt, he could throw off the yoke of Babylon. Jeremiah counseled submission, but the king refused. Nebuchadnezzar came in person with all his host and laid siege to Jerusalem. Shut off from help from without, the Jews soon were famishing for want of bread. The horrors of this famine were awful. For a description of it one should read the book of Lamentations. Mothers ate their own children (Lam. 4:10). The richest, even ladies in silken robes, wandered about searching for scraps in the dung heaps (Lam. 4:5-10). The king, however, refused to the roofs of their month, and their skins were dried up. Added to these horrors were murderous fights between parties among the Jews. Some wanted to surrender; others insisted upon holding out.

Il. Zedekiah's Flight (v. 4-7). At length the city was broken up, and the king and his warriors fled by night. His thought was to escape to the country beyond the Jordan. A Chaldean army overtook him, scattered his army, and carried Zedekiah to Riblah, where Nebuchadnezzar had his headquarters. Here judgment was passed upon him. In his trial it was shown that his conduct of a few years ago on English lands had been broken, thus showing a himself a traitor (II Chron. 36:13). As a punishment for his treachery his own sons were slain before him, his eyes put out (v. 7), and he himself carried to Babylon, where he remained a prisoner till his death (Jer. 52:11). In this we have a marvelous fulfillment of prophecy (Ezekiel 12:3), which says that Zedekiah shall be taken to Babylon and die there, and yet not see the city. He could not see it because his eyes were out. Let us learn from this that that which God says will surely come to pass, even though we cannot explain its details.

III. The Destruction of the City (v. 8-10). Not only were the people taken captive, but the city itself was subjected to the utmost rigors of war. They plundered the house of the Lord, the palace and the houses of the rich, and then consumed them to the flames (v. 9). They even broke down the walls of Jerusalem (v. 10) and massacred many of the people (Lam. 2:3, 4).

IV. Disposition of the Inhabitants and the Contents of the Temple (v. 11-21). The inhabitants (v. 11, 12). They were divided into two classes; those who had deserted to the Babylonians during the siege and those who were forced to leave the city at the time it was taken. Many doubtless deserted to the Babylonians during this siege, as even Jeremiah was arrested on this charge (Jer. 38:13). The poor of the land were left to be vine dressers and husbandmen. The wealthy and influential were taken away, as they would be of value to the conquering nation; besides they would be a menace if left behind. The poor were left because paper captives would be a burden.

Besides it was very undesirable for the land to lie in waste, as then they could not exact tribute from it. To that end encouragement was given by the Babylonians as "vine dressers and husbandmen" were given to the poor.

2. The contents of the temple (v. 12-21). From the temple which had been twice plundered before (II Chron. 36:7, 10), such of gold, silver and bronze vessels as still remained were taken, even the great pillars of the molten sea. The captives and the treasure were delivered to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, where more than three score of men were killed (v. 19-21).

Be Not Remiss.

The friendly word, the kindly usage of companionship and recollection, are never more acceptable than in strenuous days like these. It is well to let conduct give the lie to the cynical proverb, "Out of sight out of mind."—Buffalo (N. Y.) Times.

Discord in Order.

Kerrigan De Witt Kelly, that after the war the war-ridden people of Europe will get a square deal.

Kelly—They will live in desecrated thrones, quakes an' knaves!—Life.

Everything.

"What's in a name?"

"Well, I know a man who has everything in his wife's name."

When a man gets the last word in an argument the chances are that it is because he throws it at him.